

***NH Department of Health and Human Services  
Plan to Close the Cliff Effect for Individuals and Families  
who Receive Public Benefits Working Group  
Meeting Minutes***

Friday, November 22, 2019

**I. Call to order**

Chris Tappan called to order the kick-off meeting of the Cliff Effect Working Group Organizational meeting at 3:00PM on Friday, November 22, 2019 at NH Employment Security (45 S. Fruit Street, Concord, NH)

**II. Attendance**

- Christine Brennan (designee for Frank Edelblut)
- George Copadis
- Lisa English
- Anna Hamel
- Dr. Susan Huard (designee for Dr. Ross Gittell)
- Allison Joseph
- Mark Laliberte (designee for Taylor Caswell)
- Rich Lavers
- Donnalee Lozeau
- Dee Pouliot (designee for Dean Christon)
- Representative Mary Jane Wallner
- Chris Santaniello
- Chris Tappan

Members of the public

Absent:

- Christina Lachance
- Senator Cindy Rosenwald

Quorum is present

### III. Open issues

#### a) Welcome and Introductions – *Chris Tappan*

- Members introduced themselves and shared what their roles are and what they could bring to the working group

#### b) Overview of RSA 91-A Public Proceedings / Right to Know – *Lisa English*

- All meetings are open to the public
- Any emails that are part of your work are public documents
- While draft documents are exempted, drafts become a public document if exchanged to the majority of the group
- If the working group forms sub-committees they are also considered public bodies under RSA 91-A
- Draft Minutes will be posted within 5 business days

#### c) Overview of the Charge of the HB 4 Cliff Effect Working Group – *Chris Tappan*

- To identify program and policy alignment opportunities at the local, state, and federal level
- To support state-driven policies and systems alignment that improves access to and success in education, training, and employment for parents
- To develop a regional learning community focused on whole-family approaches to employment equity that is adaptable to other regions

#### d) Overview of NH Whole Families Vision– *Chris Tappan*

- Strengthen & expand the NH Chapter Team
- Establish a focus on solving the Cliff Effect through expanded partnerships, policy changes, identifying opportunities to braid funding and if necessary through legislation
- Connect with other key initiatives and align outcomes
- Embarking on Economic Analysis

e) Overview of NH Whole Families NH Chapter Team – *Donnalee Lozeau*

- The structure of the NH Chapter Team includes multiple groups working together to put families in the center of all future decisions/plans
- The NH Chapter currently has identified four (4) sub-groups (employers/workforce; childcare; transportation; housing)

f) Discussion about the national work with the U.S. Interagency Council on Economic Mobility – *Lisa English*

- American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) Leadership Retreat was held in October, which brought together Federal partners; state and local level executives to network and share information on initiatives. New Hampshire's White Paper was referenced by several participants and Federal Partners are interested in this work group's progress
- HUD stated it will issue a request for public comment on how to correct economic mobility (not limited to just housing)
- Office of Family Assistance is seeking statutory language to allow for demonstration projects
- Office of Management may issue a request for comment regarding the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and whether there may be better indicators of poverty
- National Association of Medicaid Directors (NAMD) met about a week ago and participants echoed similar themes that were raised at the APHSA leadership retreat
- The DHHS NH Whole Families Approach to Jobs Integration Team is looking at the rules to identify current barriers and to see what, if any, policy changes can be recommended in response to the upcoming requests for comment

g) Developing the Initial Cliff Effect Plan – *Chris Santaniello*

- Initial report on the plan to close the cliff effect (including policy recommendations) is to be submitted by March 1, 2020 and we anticipate a fully developed plan by summer which would align with the Legislative and Budget cycle

h) Overview of Economic Analysis and Cliff Calculator – *Rich Lavers*

- NH issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) based largely on the NH White Paper
- Key elements include social determinants of health, benefits, business climate, and social vulnerability index
- Will announce partner next week and will have a six (6) month engagement
- Kick-off expected mid-December after contract goes to the Governor and Council and anticipate mid-June engagement
- Progress of the work will be brought back to this working group

i) The Benefits Cliff / Marginal Tax Rate Calculator Project – *Chris Tappan*

- Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG) reached out to inquire if we would become part of a small group to build a custom calculator that will help with the identification of and planning for benefit cliffs free of charge
- Exploratory discussion will take place after Thanksgiving, prime opportunity and timeline works well with tasks this working group has been charged with

#### **IV. New Business**

a) Identify Chair

- Chris Tappan recommended Co-Chairs to have a partnership between state and external partners; recommendation passed unanimously
- Chris Tappan made a motion to elect Lisa English as the DHHS Co-Chair; Mary Jane Wallner seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously
- Chris Tappan made a motion to elected Donnalee Lozeau as the external partner Co-Chair; Dr. Susan Huard seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously

b) Develop meeting schedule

- Group agreed to skip December meeting and then have a meeting the first week and last week of January 2020 and a meeting in mid-February. Doodle poll will be distributed to determine date/times

## **V. Questions / Comment Period**

- a) Rich Lavers shared copies of online job summary report which showcases the unique postings for NH based employment
- b) Due to short timelines, as we segue onto our next steps we encourage members to make sure we think of opportunities and efforts to use data and information to share with economic analyst partner
- c) New business/summary of discussion

## **VI. Adjournment**

Chris Tappan called to order the kick-off meeting of the Cliff Effect Working Group  
Organizational meeting adjourned the meeting at 4:35PM

*Minutes submitted by: Maureen DiTomaso*